Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1556 - June 8, 2007

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1556 with a release date of Friday, June 8, 2007 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. A Manassas Virginia ham proves RF ingress can seriously hamper BPL, South Africa's ham community takes a stand on BPL, and the FCC takes another step toward an enhanced Emergency Alert System. All this and more on Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1556 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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THE BPL FIGHT: MANASSAS VA HAM PROVES BPL INGRESS AT PROBLEM EVEN AT QRP

A simple test conducted by a ham radio operator in Manassas, Virginia, has provided proof positive that even flea-power Q-R-P ham radio operations can shut down Broadband Over Powerline Internet access operation. Amateur Radio Newsline's Don Carlson, KQ6FM, reports:

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The revelation comes on the website of George Tarnovsky, K4GVT. On it, Tarnovsky shows the results of tests made using only 40 watts and QRP at 2 watts on the 80 through 10 meter bands.

The gear used in his test was an Icom 706 transceiver, with Outbacker Perth antenna on his car parked curb side. The vehicle was approximately 70 feet from his house, and more than 100 feet from the BPL power pole interface. Inside the home a laptop with BPL interface repeatedly downloading a 40 Megabyte file.

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Tarnovsky: "Well, what we found is that when we were within reasonably close proximity -- I would say within 100 feet or so of any of the BPL installations -- when we transmitted on E-CARS on 7.225 that we actually had an affect on them. The way ewe knew that we had an affect was that as soon as you released the microphone (PTT), rather than hearing the typical BPL noise, you knew the system was backed up with data and consequently became very aggressive and just blanked (the band). If you looked at a spectrum display of it -- it just covered the entire spectrum. Its almost as though all the stops

were off. In other words the band stops were
off. Just rip and get the data out and that's exactly what it did."

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What K4GVT found was that on all bands the
connection suffered at least a major slowdown
when he transmitted at the 40 watt level. On 80
through 15 meters the 40 watts caused the
download to stop altogether and requiring it to
be restarted. But the biggest surprise was on 40
meters where 2 watts of R-F rendered the BPL
connection numb. He says that the 2 watts at 7
MHz caused the BPL data transfer to stop.

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Tarnovsky: " With the original G1 installation,
2 watts would have an affect on it. Since then
they have made some changes in their firmware to
the G1. The G2 has agile notching so they can go
in and they can notch it (the spectrum), but
being agile they can also remove them and that's
the problem that we are facing here."

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Tarnovsky notes that regardless of what carriers
a BPL provider might notch out of a system, the
system operator cannot filter its input. As
such, R-F ingress to the BPL system is wide open,
and susceptible to all near field RF from 2 to 29
MHz. Even one that only 2 watts and more than 100 feet away.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Don Carlson, KQ6FM, in Reno.

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More on the BPL ingress experiment by K4GVT
including a band by band results chart is on his
website. Its in cyberspace at
www.k4gvt.com/bpl/bplweakness.html (ARNewsline(tm), QRZ.com)

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THE BPL FIGHT: LATEST SOUTH AFRICA REPORT NOTES INTERFERENCE POTENTIAL

South Africa's ham community has confirmed what
so many others know already. That Broadband Over
Powerline Internet access is a major source of
interference to High Frequency communications

During a recent net, South African Radio League
President Graham Hartlett, presented an update on
the society's position of powerline
telecommunication in South Africa. The latest

tests have confirmed that BPL has an inherent interference potential and that this must be taken care of in new type approval specification for powerline data communications systems.

Hartlett noted that telecommunications regulator ICASA has recognized that it will need to strengthen its interference complaint handling capability and has asked the EMC working group to develop type approval specifications and how to deal with interference should it occur. These specifications would be an interim measure and in no way pre-empt international specifications. Once international standards have been agreed, the interim specifications would be revised and brought into line. (WIA News)

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THE BPL FIGHT: ARRL SAYS FCC MUST SHUT DOWN AMBIENT

Still with BPL news, word that the ARRL has again demanded that the FCC shut down Ambient Corporation's broadband over power line pilot project in Briarcliff Manor, New York.

In a May 31 letter to FCC Spectrum Enforcement Division Chief Kathryn S. Berthot, ARRL General Counsel Christopher D. Imlay, W3KD, says that it's long past time that the Commission enforce its own rules, and again objected to the Commission's inexplicable inaction in the face of evidence the system is noncompliant.

On May 21 the FCC called on the BPL equipment maker and system operator to demonstrate it's complying with all terms of the Part 5 Experimental license authorizing the system, or face possible enforcement action.

Imlay's letter pointed out that the FCC's May 21 letter made no mention of Condition #1 of Ambient's Part 5 Experimental license. That condition requires that if any interference occurs, the holder of the authorization will be subject to immediate shutdown. (ARRL)

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RESCUE RADIO: FCC MOVES TOWARD AN UPGRADED EAS

The FCC has adopted a Second Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that strengthens the nation's EAS or Emergency Alert System. The Commission's Order promotes the development of fully digital Next Generation

technologies and delivery systems that will better serve the American public.

According to the CGC Communicator, the Order requires EAS participants to accept messages using a messaging system called Common Alerting Protocol. CAP as it will be known is the groundwork for what's being called the Next Generation EAS delivery systems. This protocol will need to be in place no later than 180 days after FEMA makes a key announcement.

The Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making is the second part of the decision. It seeks comment on whether participants should be required to deliver EAS alerts originated by local, county, tribal, or other state governmental entities. More on the Report and Order is on-line at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-273458A1.pdf (CGC)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: RAFT DE-ORBITS

The US Naval Academy's RAFT ham radio satellite has reached the end of its orbital life. Data compiled from stations monitoring its 145.825 MHz downlink indicates that RAFT de-orbit occurred between 02:00 and 03:00 UTC on May 30th. Its final beacon was heard at 01:45 UTC that day. (ANS)

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WITH ARNEWSLINE(tm): 2007 YHOTY NOMINATIONS NOW CLOSED

The nominating season for the 2007 Young Ham of the Year Award is now closed. The deadline for submitting nominations was midnight on May 30th, The judging committee is now hard at work selecting this years winner. We will have that persons name to announce in a few weeks.

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Break 1

From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world, including the X Warn repeater system serving Xenia, Ohio.

(5 sec pause here)

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS LAW: BROADCASTERS WIN APPEAL ON INDECENCY AND PROFANITY RULES

A federal appeals court has overturned an indecency ruling against the Fox Broadcasting and has broadly questioned whether the Federal Communications Commission has any right to police the airwaves for offensive language. Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, has more:

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In a 2 to 1 decision on June 4th, , the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit in New York ruled that the FCC went too far in issuing a 2006 decision against Fox for separate incidents in 2002 and 2003 after two personalities each uttered an expletive on live television.

In 2004, the agency reversed years of policy and effectively branded even "fleeting," or one-time, use of an expletive off-limits on broadcast television and radio In its ruling the court found that that the FCC had not adequately, or constitutionally, explained why it changed its mind on the fleeting use of profanity and ordered the agency to retool its regulations.

Because the Fox incidents occurred before the FCC's 2004 ruling on fleeting profanity, the agency did not fine the network, though it did rule that the broadcasts were indecent. Fox appealed the FCC ruling to the 2nd Circuit, saying the new rule set a dangerous precedent for clamping down on free speech.

According to the Washington Post, the decision is likely to be looked on as a rebuke to the FCC and a victory for television networks, which in recent years have pushed back against the regulatory agency's crackdown on indecency. It could also bolster the broadcasters argument that parents need better tools such as channel-blocking technology rather than more government regulation to police the viewing habits of their children.

FCC Chairman Kevin Martin said that he was disappointed in the court's ruling. He added that FCC attorneys were reviewing the agency's options and might appeal the decision to the Supreme Court. Lawyers who specialize in the First Amendment issues told the Washington Post that such an appeal could easily become a test case to determine whether the federal government still has the right and responsibility to police the public airwaves.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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What affect this ruling might have on indecency
and profanity issues in other FCC administered
services is unknown. (ARNewsline(tm) from published news reports)

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RESCUE RADIO: TSA VOLUNTEER TRAINS NEW HAMS

30 Transportation Safety Administration
volunteers have been trained to use emergency
high frequency radio equipment during disasters.
The 30 have also qualified for Amateur Radio operator licenses.

According to news reports, TSA employees
participating in the May 9th training traveled to
Pensacola, Florida for the session. Volunteers
came from as far away as Louisiana, Alabama,
Mississippi, Arizona and New York State.

Spokesman Steve Earnest said that Pensacola is
fortunate that it has a Transportation Safety
Officer who is also a highly experienced Amateur
Radio operator, trainer and examiner.

Earnset says that this radio amateurs volunteer
efforts have given the agency tremendous in-house
capability. One he says would have been
expensive for the agency to replicate using
contractors.   More is on-line at
/www.tsa.gov/press/happenings/amateur_radio_operators.shtm (TSA Release)

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RESCUE RADIO: TENNESSEE RED CROSS CHAPTER GIFTED RADIO GEAR

Within the next 18 months, the Treis-County
Tennessee Chapter of the American Red Cross
should have a new emergency communications
station. One with improved capabilities ready to
use in the event of a disaster.

According to the Tullahoma News Guardian, the
emergency communications station is being made
possible by a donation by the wife of the late
Bill Bearden, a former Red Cross volunteer and
ham radio operator. Mrs. Bearden has donated two
antennas and numerous pieces of Amateur Radio
equipment that is being refurbished. One of the
antennas will be installed on a new tower at the
local Red Cross headquarters where the station will be installed.

Chapter Executive Director Alice Cano thanked Mrs. Bearden and noted that the new station would better enable the Red Cross to stay in touch with drivers of emergency response vehicles. She also noted that Bryan Marlowe, KE4LPL, a member of the Red Cross chapter's information technology team, Jimmy Floyd, NQ4U and other radio amateurs make up the Treis County chapter's disaster communications committee. (Tullahoma News)

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RESCUE RADIO: ATV AT SANTA BARBARA EM COMMS DRILL

Fifteen California Amateur Radio Emergency Service volunteers equipped with slow-scan television assisted with a voluntary wildfire evacuation drill on Saturday morning, April 28th. An exercise involving residents of over 900 homes near the city of Santa Barbara.

During the event, five ARES teams were stationed at key intersections where winding, narrow roads merged into the main street out of a mountain community. The amateurs sent slow scan photos in a pre-arranged rotation, with the camera number appearing in the picture. Each number corresponding to the assigned intersection so officials could easily identify the location on large area maps.

Receiving stations were set up at the City's Emergency Operating Center. According to Santa Barbara City Fire Battalion Chief John Ahlman, the amateur television pictures were the only continuous, real-time information his department received from the field.

This is not the first time ham radio has been a part of Santa Barbara emergency communications drills. Fire officials were so impressed with the information provided by the ARES slow-scan TV at a smaller drill two years ago, that they invited the ham radio group back to participate in this one as well. (N6ZKJ)

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ENFORCEMENT: BEHRINGER FINED $1,000,000 FOR UNAUTHORIZED GEAR SALES

Electronics supplier Behringer USA, Inc. has been dinged with a proposed one million dollar fine by the FCC. This, for marketing 50 models of unauthorized radio frequency equipment in the United States without prior consent from the regulatory agency. The gear in question is described as digital audio music devices. This says the FCC was a willful and repeated violation of Section 302(b)

of the Communications Act of 1934, and Section 2.803(a) of the Commission's Rules. (FCC)

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REGULATORY NEWS: ARRL VEC TYPO LEADS TO LICENSE CLASS CORRECTION

The FCC has rescinded an Extra class upgrade accidentally granted to W5VXJ of Phoenix, Arizona, who had only filed for a General class upgrade. And it's doing so with the implied consent of the radio amateur involved. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, has the details:

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The story goes this way. On February 2, 2006, the Commission received from the ARRL VEC an electronic data file that contained an application requesting modification of John R. Ure, W5VXJ''s license to upgrade his operating privileges from Technician Plus Class to Amateur Extra Class. The license was modified to authorize Amateur Extra Class operator privileges on February 2, 2006.

On April 19, 2006, the ARRL VEC requested that the Commission rescind this modification. This, on the grounds that the earlier data file it submitted contained a typographical error and that the requested upgrade was intended to modify the operator privileges for Amateur Radio Service Station W5VXJ to General Class operator privileges.

Based on the new information, the FCC contacted Ure and proposed to modify the license to change the license class from Amateur Extra Class to General Class.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in Los Angeles.

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W5VXJ did not protest the proposed modification of his license within the requisite thirty-day time frame s the FCC says that Ure is deemed to have consented to the modification. (FCC)

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS LAW: SPOOFING CAN GET YOU 5 IN JAIL

Spoof and you could go to jail. So says one house of Congress. Jim Davis, W2JKD, has more:

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The House of Representatives has voted to make phone "spoofing," the use of fake caller ID

information to defraud people, a felony subject. The bill makes it a federal crime to use false caller ID information with the intent to defraud or to deceive the recipient about the identity of the caller. A conviction brings a 5 year prison sentence and forfeiture of any gains from the offense, or of the software or technology use to commit the crime. Exemptions are made for the activities of law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

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The bill now goes to the Senate for action and debate. (Technology Today)

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NEW AT HAMVENTION 2007: LINK COMMUNICATIONS

Continuing with our coverage of new products shown at the recent Dayton Hamvention, we turn this week to a rather specialized area. That of repeater controllers and a company called Link Communications. Here's Fred Vobbe, W8HDU:

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Audio report only. Please download the audio report at www.arnewsline.org

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More on the RLC-DSP404 is on line at www.csm1000.com (ARNewsline(tm))

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: "AMATEUR RADIO TODAY" IS #1 HAM VIDEO ON YOUTUBE

"Amateur Radio Today" the ARRL video produced by Dave Bell, W6AQ, Bill Baker, W1BKR, Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF and the late Alan Kaul, W6RCL -- and written by W6RCL-- has today become the most watched ham radio video on www.YouTube.com

As this is written, there are three postings of

"Amateur Radio Today" of this show on YouTube. The one posted by "Tomintexas" has to date garnered some 24,423 people screening it. Another by a user named mranticocialguy has been screened 3,727 time and the third by user VA3CSS that has been viewed 1859 times. Adding all three postings together, "Amateur Radio Today" has been viewed on YouTube a total close to 30,000 times.

In second place in the most viewed ham radio YouTube videos is "The Ham Band" singing "Come and Join Us On The Airwaves." The video featuring Andrew John Huddelston, Oh-Zed-1-X-J and his wife Lissa Ladefoged on a 100 foot high tower has so far racked up an impressive 20,676 views.

Third place goes to the on-line programmer 88 SLIDE whose "Ham Radio Field Day" video has garnered 6785 views. It uses footage shot around Los Angeles and Orange County California on Field Day weekend, 2006.

While none of these shows have set any YouTube viewing records their numbers are still very respectable for a special interest such as Amateur Radio. (ARNewsline(tm))

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COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY: DAB STANDARD BEING CHANGED

A major change is coming to a digital broadcast radio near you. Jeramy Boot, G4NJH, is in Nottingham in the U-K with the latest on DAB standards and the future of digital receiver design:

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Current DAB radios may be unable to receive anything in a few years time, according to Pure Digital.

This is due to the introduction of DAB Plus, which uses the new AAC Plus audio coding. The new DAB standard is incompatible with existing DAB receivers, and will render them obsolete. The new coding system is twice as efficient as the MP2 system currently in use, meaning that the number of channels per multiplex could double.

Manufacturers are expected to quietly switch to producing dual standard receivers before any changeover occurs.

I'm Jeramy Boot, G4NJH.

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The switchover only affects terrestrial DAB radio

and not satellite delivered services such as Sirius or XM. (GB2RS)

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WORLDBEAT - GERMANY: THE DL 100 AWARD

In news from around the world, German hams are on the air throughout June with a special celebration. This with members of the radio clubs of Norddeich and Hage commemorating the 100th anniversary of the well known coast station Norddeich Radio. Operations are planned for 160 through 10 meters on various modes. The special callsign, DL100DAN is being used and a special D A N 100 award will be available. More information can be found at http://norddeich-radio.de/ (OPDX)

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WORLDBEAT - JAPAN: JARL TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL QRP DAY

The Japan Amateur Radio League's QRP Club will be running five special event stations, 8J1P, 8J3P, 8J4P, 8J5P and 8J6P on June 17th to celebrate the International QRP Day. International QRP Day was designated by the IARU Region 1 Conference held in April 1984 in Italy to stimulate QRP operation worldwide. It was reaffirmed by the IARU Region 3 Conference in New Zealand in December of 1985 (JARL)

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WORLDBEAT - UK: GB3RAL PROPOSED 40 AND 60 MHz BEACONS ON THEIR WAY

In VHF news, work from the United Kingdom that the new GB3RAL 40.05 and 60.05MHz beacons are due to receive government clearance in mid-June but both have already cleared their key Primary User stages.   Assuming that regulatory clearance is also obtained the sponsors will go forward to for final clearance and approval sometime this summer.

If approved, it brings ham radio in the UK closer to the prospect of a unique 40, 50, 60 and 70 MHz co-located beacon system at the Rutherford Appleton Labs location near Oxford. While not in amateur bands, the 40 and 60 MHz beacons should prove to be extremely useful propagation study markers both in the UK and world wide. (GB2RS)

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ON THE AIR: CELEBRATING IN INDY WITH HAM RADIO

Back in the United States, Indianapolis, Indiana has been a hotbed of special event

stations during May and it continues in
June. Fire up that new HF rig and get ready to
copy. Jack Parker W8ISH has this report from the Circle City.

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If you have your HF rig fired up and your antenna
pointed toward Indianapolis you many score some
great contacts in the next few weeks. Beginning
Friday evening June 8th the Indianapolis Radio
Club will begin making contacts from the site of
the USS Indianapolis Memorial. The USS
Indianapolis was sunk during World War Two after
delivering atomic bomb components that were later
used in the attack on Hiroshima. Listen for the
W9IND call sign during the 44 hour event or check
the Indianapolis Radio Club web page for more information.

The pace continues to quicken as the United
States Grand Prix rolls into town on Fathers Day
weekend, June 17th. Special event station W9IMS
will be on the air, taking check-ins, during that
weekend . This world class special event station
operates during each one of the major races at
the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. If you don't
catch W9IMS during the Formula One race you have
another opportunity to snag a special QSL card
during the Brickyard 400 NASCAR race the weekend of July 29th.

And last but not least, many central Indiana
clubs report gearing up for Field Day 2007 on
June 23rd and 24th. Maybe we'll catch you on the HF bands.

Reporting for Amateur Radio Newsline this is Jack Parker W8ISH.

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The USS Indianapolis Memorial station will join
nearly 70 other special event stations around the
world as part of the Museum Ships Weekend.   (W8ISH)

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DX

In D-X, word that N6PF, will be celebrating his 60th birthday with a
visit to 3A2MD's QTH in Monaco. He will be
operating with his call portable 3A from June
25th to the 30th. Bands and modes of activity
were not provided. QSL via his home callsign.

And SQ8JCA, will once again be active portable 5N2
from Cogi, Nigera during all of June. Activity is
expected to be on 80 through 6 meters on SSB
only. Listen out for him between 10:00-16:00 UTC
and QSL to his home callsign address.

Lastly, members of the Borisov Amateur Radio Club will be active as EW905B between now and November 30th. This, three number callsign is to celebrate the 905th anniversary of Borisov City in Belarus. QSL this one via EW2EO.

(From various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: THE LONG SAIL

And finally this week the story of a voyage by sea and the role played by Amateur Radio. Rob Mt Barker, VK5MM, of the W-I-A News has the details:

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"Sometimes we could hear them, but they couldn't hear us. But we knew they were out there."

They were the words of John Hackney of Orono, who joined the crew of a Trans-Atlantic sailing expedition in the British Virgin Islands.

A father and son crew from Bangor, along with an assortment of additional mates, completed the last leg of a journey that took them from Bangor to ports throughout Europe and back again over the course of two seasons of sailing.

Dan Cassidy, 58, and his son David, 23, left Bangor in May 2006 to start the voyage that would cover nearly 18,000 miles and take them to 10 different countries. And Amateur Radio went along for the ride.

In a smaller boat, rotating watches have to keep an eye out for other, larger vessels and an ear out for the weather forecasts. For those communications, they relied on a Ham radio contact with an inland operator who monitors weather conditions for mariners.

The Ham radio also allowed Fleana's crew to send e-mails, which sometimes were more reliable than voice communications. Those e-mails were a godsend for family members.

"We were getting some information," said Deena Cassidy, Dan's wife.

"We knew things were going well, so I didn't really worry."

Good day. I'm Robb, VK5MM

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As we go to air, the voyage continues. (WIA News)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

Before we go, the results of our on-line poll that asked the question of what are your upgrade plans now that Morse is no longer required. Well 38.8% of those who responded said they planned to upgrade while only 15.8% said they will stay with the license they now have. And a whopping 45.8% clicked the box that said that they wished everyone would stop talking about the Morse exam going away. We tend to agree.

The new poll now on line regards your ham radio reading habits. It asks what is your favorite major U.S. ham radio magazine. You vote at www.arnewsline.org.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Damron, N8TMW, and I'm Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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